

REMARKS

The Abstract is objected to. According to the foregoing, the Abstract is replaced.
Withdrawal of the objection is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-31 are pending in the application.

Claims 16-23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101, for allegedly being directed to non-statutory matter subject matter. According to the foregoing the claims are amended.
Withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-4, 7, 9-12, 15-19, 22, 23, 24-27 and 31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Okazaki et al. (U.S. Patent 5,666,555).

Claims 5, 13, 20, 21, 28, and 29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Okazaki in view of Yamagami (U.S. Patent 6, 334, 025).

Claims 6, 14, 22, and 30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Okazaki in view of Yamagami as applied to claims 20-21, 5, 13, and 28-29 above, and further in view of Hilpert, Jr. et al. (U.S. Patent 6,469,712).

Claim 8 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Okazaki in view of Tarabella (U.S. Patent 5,796,945).

According to the foregoing, claims are cancelled without disclaimer or prejudice, claims are amended, and new claim 32 is added, and thus pending claims remain for reconsideration, which is respectfully requested.

No new matter has been added.

The independent claims are 1, 9, 16, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, and 32. The independent claims 1, 9, 16, 19, 22 and 23 are rejected as being allegedly anticipated by Okazaki. According to the foregoing the independent claims are amended. A difference between the claimed embodiment and Okazaki is "wherein said audio output control means sets volume of said audio data to one of multiple values so as to be in inverse proportion to distance values generated by said distance information generating means, synthesizes said audio data corresponding to said plurality of video images displayed by said display image generating means, using said respective volumes, and outputs said synthesized audio data." For example, the present application page 22, lines 12-15 support the claim amendments.

A benefit of the above-mentioned configuration is explained in the present application

page 22, line 25 to page 23, line 6, as "With such a configuration, audio for a video image near cursor display position is output at high volume, and audio for a video image far from cursor display position is output at low volume. Accordingly, a user can use a mouse or other pointing device to increase the volume of audio for a video image approached by a cursor, allowing such user to apprehend the content of such video image; meanwhile, while audio volume for other video images is low, that audio is still being output, assisting a user in apprehending the content of the respective video images."

Okazaki describes that "The audio selector 102 selects one of a plurality of audio signals which are input from the plurality of the external image reproduction apparatuses 101 and outputs the selected audio signal to a speaker 109 (col. 2, line 35-col. 3, line 2)." However, a prima facie case of anticipation over Okazaki has not been established, because Okazaki's audio signal selection only outputs sound corresponding to a designated moving picture, which teaches away from the claimed embodiments and fails to disclose expressly or inherently the claimed "sets volume of said audio data to one of multiple values so as to be in inverse proportion to distance values generated by said distance information generating means, synthesizes said audio data corresponding to said plurality of video images displayed by said display image generating means, using said respective volumes, and outputs said synthesized audio data," providing a benefit of "while audio volume for other video images is low, that audio is still being output, assisting a user in apprehending the content of the respective video images." The Office Action pages 5-6 acknowledges in Okazaki, when a cursor is within a window audio is output and when the cursor is outside the window no audio is output. Further, Okazaki fails to inherently disclose the claimed embodiments, because Okazaki teaches away from outputting sound from a plurality of windows and it is not necessary in Okazaki to output sound from a plurality of windows by discussing in column 5, lines 14-18 "that only the sound corresponding to a designated moving picture selected from the plurality of moving picture display windows can be obtained."

Therefore, the aforementioned configuration of the claims achieves the effect "facilitates recognition of which audio data corresponds to which video image" and at the same time "enables a user to easily apprehend the content of video image being displayed." However, Okazaki cannot achieve the effect that "enables a user to easily apprehend the content of video image being displayed" for "a plurality of moving pictures" at the same time, because Okazaki only outputs audio signal of a selected image and does not output other signals.

The same holds true for the other cited references.

Further, dependent claims and independent claims 19-22 and 23 recite other patentably distinguishing features of their own, or are at least patentably distinguishing over the relied upon references for the same rationale for independent claims 1, 9 and 16, namely "sets volume of said audio data to one of multiple values so as to be in inverse proportion to distance values generated by said distance information generating means, synthesizes said audio data corresponding to said plurality of video images displayed by said display image generating means, using said respective volumes, and outputs said synthesized audio data."

Further, new independent claim 32 recites substantially same inventive concept as other independent claims and is patentably distinguishing over Okazaki for the same rationale for other independent claims, namely "setting the volume of said audio data for the plurality of video images to one of multiple values in inverse proportion to said distances, synthesizing said audio data corresponding to said plurality of video images, using said respective volumes, and outputting said synthesized audio data to the audio output device."

CONCLUSION

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,
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Date: February 6, 2008

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